

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

Figure 4 has been amended to change the reference number "46" to "50". An annotated marked-up copy of Figure 4 is attached and show the change in red. A clean copy of Figure 4 is also attached and incorporates the change.

Attachments: Annotated Marked-up Drawing of Figure 4

Replacement Sheet of Figure 4

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended. All other claims remain unchanged. In addition, the specification and Figure 4 have been amended. No new matter has been added by any of these amendments.

The specification has been amended to correct the designation for the annular groove from "46" to "50". Figure 4 was amended to reflect this designation. None of the amendments made to the specification or Figure alter the substantive nature of the disclosure.

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Elkins et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,275,908, Figs. 1-5. Claims 5-15 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Elkins et al.

Claim 1 recites in a ball component for a ball and socket joint for a water conduit, comprising a ball, a collar *integrally formed with* said ball. Elkins fails to teach or disclose a collar that is *integrally formed* with a ball, as recited in claim 1. Elkins teaches a lip 32 which "nests snugly within segment 28" (see Elkins et al., Col. 3, lines 18-20). Lip 32 is not integrally formed with the ball 16, since ball 16 is separated into a pair of mating approximately hemispherical segments 27 and 28, one of which contains lip 32. (See Elkins et al., Col. 3, 8-20).

Furthermore, Claim 3 recites a ball component as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said collar includes a coupling for connecting said ball component to another plumbing component. While Elkins teaches a fluid coupler 10 that has a base 12 internally threaded as at 14 for attachment to a conventional water supply pipe, Elkins fails to teach or disclose that the lip 32 includes a coupling for connecting the ball component to another plumbing component. The only thing that lip 32 is connected with is the annular skirt 30 which is a part of segment 28. As a result, applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of these rejections.

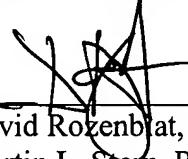
CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth in this Amendment and Response to Office Action, it is respectfully submitted that the Pending Application, including Claims 1-15, is in condition for allowance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the foregoing amendments be entered and the Pending Application be promptly allowed.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if such contact would in any way facilitate and expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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ANNOTATED MARKED-UP DRAWING

